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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A knowledge switch comprising:
  - (a) a logic kernel for receiving event information regarding a security event for which an information alert has been defined, for locating the corresponding information alert, and for automatically distributing the information alert to intended recipients;
  - (b) a content database accessible by the logic kernel for storing information received from public and private computer networks, the information including the information alert;
  - (c) a profiles module for storing user profiles including information for distributing the ~~information stored in the content database~~ the information alert to the intended recipients, the profiles module including a contact list template for receiving input from a user for defining a plurality of different contact profiles of the user for delivering the information alert to ~~[[a]] the~~ user, each contact profile indicating at least one mode ~~for contacting the user~~ and contact information for ~~contacting~~ delivering the information alert ~~to~~ the user in the at least one mode, and a schedule template for associating a plurality of different time periods with the different contact profiles, wherein the knowledge switch is adapted to deliver ~~[[an]] the~~ information alert to the user using at least one of the contact profiles and time periods specified by the user;

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- (d) a plurality of input/output modules for distributing the information alert to the intended recipients via defined user devices; and
  - (e) a knowledge switch configurator including functionality for allowing an administrator to define the event information, the information alert to be associated with the event information, and content to be included in the information alert, the content including a directive for instructing the intended recipients regarding action to be taken in response to the security event.
2. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the logic kernel includes software that is configurable by end users or administrators using templates provided by the knowledge switch configurator.
  3. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the profiles module stores media portals defined by end users.
  4. (Original) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the input/output modules include a web server for sending and receiving information via the Internet.
  5. (Original) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the input/output modules include a wireless PDA server for sending information to and receiving information from a wireless PDA.
  6. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the input/output modules include a phone alert server for automatically distributing the information alert to the intended recipients via a telephone network.

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7. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the input/output modules include a fax, email, and SMS server for sending and receiving messages in fax, email, and SMS format.
8. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 comprising an event template associated with the knowledge switch configurator, the event template including customizable fields for configuring the logic kernel to deliver information alerts to the intended recipients in response to defined event triggers, wherein the event triggers are activatable by at least one of: authorized individuals, devices, and an inference engine programmed to predict an emergency.
9. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 8 wherein the event template includes a customizable field for configuring the logic kernel to deliver different information alerts to different individuals.
10. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the contact list template includes user-editable fields for specifying contact information for contacting the user via each of a plurality of contact modes for each contact profile.
11. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the schedule template includes a user-editable calendar for associating times of day with each contact profile.
12. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 comprising an intra-agency knowledge switch management template associated with the knowledge switch configurator, the intra-agency knowledge switch management template

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comprising an interface for configuring the logic kernel to distribute information alerts to predetermined individuals within an organization.

13. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 comprising an inter-agency knowledge switch management template associated with the knowledge switch configurator, the inter-agency knowledge switch management template comprising an interface for configuring the logic kernel to distribute different information alerts to different groups of individuals.
14. (Currently Amended) A hierarchical system of knowledge switches for delivering alerts to end users, the system comprising:
  - (a) a plurality of first knowledge switches located at predetermined points of presence for receiving security event information, for locating corresponding information alerts, and for distributing the information alerts over a computer network, wherein the information alerts each include a directive for instructing intended recipients on action to be taken in response to the corresponding security event; and
  - (b) a plurality of second knowledge switches located at predetermined agencies, the second knowledge switches being coupled to the first knowledge switches via the computer network, each second knowledge switch being configured to receive the information alerts, apply a policy level to the information alerts, and distribute the information alerts to selected end users associated with each second knowledge switch based on the policy level, wherein each of the first and second knowledge switches includes a contact list template for receiving input from a user for

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defining a plurality of different contact profiles ~~for each of the~~ user, each contact profile including at least one mode ~~for contacting each user~~ and contact information for ~~contacting~~ delivering an information alert to the user in the at least one mode, and a schedule template for associating a plurality of different time periods with the different contact profiles, wherein each of the knowledge switches is adapted to deliver an information alert to its respective users using the contact profiles and times specified by the users.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second knowledge switches include knowledge switch configurators for defining information alerts and individuals for receiving the information alerts.
16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second knowledge switches are adapted to distribute the information alerts based on end user and agency certificate levels.
17. (Currently Amended) A method for defining and distributing information alerts, the method comprising:
  - (a) presenting a user with a plurality of templates for configuring a knowledge switch to identify event information regarding a security event, to provide an information alert including user-defined content, and to automatically distribute the information alert to the intended recipients in response to receiving the event information, wherein presenting the user with a plurality of templates includes providing a contact list template to the user for receiving input from the user for defining a plurality of different contact

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- profiles ~~[[for]]~~ of the user, each contact profile including at least one mode ~~for contacting the user~~ and contact information for ~~contacting~~ distributing an information alert to the user in the at least one mode, and providing a schedule template for associating different times with the contact profiles;
- (b) receiving, via the templates, event definition information for defining the security event and receiving content for the information alert to be delivered to the intended recipients, wherein receiving content for the information alert includes receiving a directive instructing the intended recipients on how to respond to the security event;
- (c) receiving, via the contact list and schedule templates, a plurality of different information alert delivery modes and corresponding times for each of the intended recipients; and
- (d) automatically distributing the information alert to the intended recipients using the information provided via the templates, wherein automatically distributing the information alert to the intended recipients includes distributing the information alert to each recipient using at least one of the plurality of contact profiles and times defined for each recipient.
18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein presenting the user with a plurality of templates includes presenting the user with a plurality of templates via a computer network interface.
19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein receiving event definition information and content includes receiving access information, user information, and triggered alert information via an event template.

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20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the access information includes spoken commands for communicating an event to a knowledge switch via a mobile or landline telephone, the user information includes the directive, and the triggered alerts information includes an alert message to be included in the information alert.
21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the contact list template includes user-editable fields for specifying contact information for the at least one contact mode for each contact profile and wherein the schedule template includes a user-editable calendar for associating times of day with each contact profile.
22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein distributing the information alert to the intended recipients using the information provided by via templates includes, for each recipient, accessing contact and schedule information stored for each recipient, converting the information alert to the appropriate format based on the contact and schedule information, and delivering the information alert via a medium specified by the contact and schedule information.
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein distributing the information alert to the intended recipients includes delivering the information alert via a telephone network to all recipients in a geographic area.
24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein distributing the information alert to the intended recipients includes parsing the information alert based on recipient certificate levels and selectively delivering portions of the

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information alert to the intended recipients based on individual end user certificate levels.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 comprising, determining whether receipt confirmation is required from each recipient, and, in response to determining that receipt confirmation is required, resending the information alert if receipt confirmation is not received within a predetermined time period.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 comprising, determining whether a response is required from each recipient, and, in response to determining that the response is required, resending the information alert if the response is not received within a predetermined time period.
27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 comprising including an authentication portion in the information alert for allowing the intended recipients to authenticate the information alert.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 comprising receiving input from the intended recipients for storing the information alert in a predetermined format, and, in response, storing the information alert for later access by the intended recipients.
29. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the event information includes an event identifier for allowing a user to inform the logic kernel of the occurrence of the event.
30. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the event information includes information generated by a machine in response to the occurrence of the event.



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31. (Previously Presented) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the knowledge switch configurator is adapted to allow the administrator to configure the logic kernel regarding input expected from the intended recipients in response to the directive.
32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the event comprises an airport security event.
33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the event information includes an event identifier for allowing a user to inform the first knowledge switches of the occurrence of the event.
34. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the event information includes information generated by a machine in response to the occurrence of the event.
35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the second knowledge switches are configured to expect predetermined input from the intended recipients in response to the directives.
36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 14 wherein the event comprises an airport security event.
37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the event information includes an event identifier for allowing a user to communicate the occurrence of the event to a knowledge switch.
38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the event information includes information generated by a machine in response to the occurrence of the event.

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39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 comprising configuring a knowledge switch to expect predetermined input from the intended recipients in response to the directive.
40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the event comprises an airport security event.
41. (New) The knowledge switch of claim 1 wherein the schedule template is adapted to receive input from the user regarding time periods during which the user can receive the information alert using each of the contact profiles.
42. (New) The system of claim 14 wherein the schedule template is adapted to receive input from the user regarding time periods during which the user can receive the information alert using each of the contact profiles.
43. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the schedule template is adapted to receive input from the user regarding time periods during which the user can receive the information alert using each of the contact profiles.